

our Nation's foremost heroes in the civil rights crusade, including the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Reverend Leach also served as the Manpower Director with Total Action Against Poverty (TAP). Even in his later years, Reverend Leach's dedication as a grassroots activist was as energized and focused as ever, and is reflected in his contribution and leadership within grassroots political campaigns, including my own.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor, remembrance and gratitude to Reverend Ralph Emerson Leach, whose life was defined by his steadfast commitment to his family and by his limitless passion to make his community, our Nation and our world, a better place. I extend my deepest condolences to his daughters and their spouses: Laura and Don, Rebecca and William, Naomi and Paul; to his son and his fiancée, Stephen and Sally; to his grandchildren, extended family members and many friends. His kindness, integrity, gentle guidance and service to others has made a difference in my life and in the lives of countless families and individuals, and he will be remembered always.

INTRODUCTION OF ROYALTY-IN-KIND FOR ENERGY ASSISTANCE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Royalty-in-Kind for Energy Assistance Improvement Act. This bill is intended to make it possible for the Department of the Interior to implement a provision in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that was intended to provide a new way to assist low-income people to heat or cool their homes.

For several years before 2005, the Department of the Interior had authority to develop "royalty-in-kind" arrangements under which companies developing federal oil could meet their required royalty payments by providing oil instead of cash. The Energy Policy Act expanded this provision to apply to natural-gas developers as well, and also added new authority for Interior to grant a preference to low-income consumers when disposing of natural gas it obtained under such an arrangement.

While this Energy Policy Act provision does not specifically reference the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), its implementation could benefit that program.

LIHEAP is intended to help low-income Americans pay for their heating and cooling costs. However, at current funding levels this critically important program serves less than 15 percent of those who qualify for it. Implementing the Energy Policy Act provision to grant a preference to low-income consumers would supplement LIHEAP funding and expand the amount of energy assistance available to the poor.

Last September, I joined my colleagues from Colorado in writing a letter to Interior Secretary Gail Norton asking her to consider beginning implementation of the new provision through a pilot program in Colorado. In the letter, we emphasized the importance of helping this country's most vulnerable citizens, who

are increasingly hard hit by rising energy costs.

In a reply to my office, the Interior Department responded that the Interior Department's lawyers had reviewed the Energy Policy Act provision and had concluded that as it now stands it could not be implemented because the current law "does not provide the Department with the authority or discretion to receive less than fair market value for the royalty gas or oil."

My bill is intended to correct the legal deficiencies in the provision as enacted to make it possible for the Interior Department to implement the program. In developing the legislation, my staff has reviewed the Interior Department's legal opinion and has consulted with the Interior Department's lawyers and with other legal experts. Based on that review, I think enactment of my bill will resolve the legal problems cited by the Interior Department and will enable the program to go forward.

Spring may be upon us, but hot summer temperatures and another winter are just months away. I believe the Energy Policy Act provision to help low-income consumers is an innovative tool that must be allowed to work. The Royalty-in-Kind for Energy Assistance Improvement Act would make this possible. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and to support energy assistance for this nation's most vulnerable residents.

Here is a brief outline of the bill:

Section One—provides a short title ("Royalty-in-Kind for Energy Assistance Improvement Act of 2006").

Section Two—sets forth findings regarding the importance of LIHEAP and the intent of the relevant provisions of law regarding payment of royalties-in-kind and the conclusion of the Interior Department that the provision of the 2005 Energy Policy Act intended to allow use of royalties-in-kind to benefit low-income consumers cannot be implemented. This section also states the bill's purpose, which is to amend that part of the Energy Policy Act in order to make it possible for it to be implemented in order to assist low-income people to meet their energy needs.

Section Three—amends the relevant provision (Section 342(j)) of the Energy Policy Act by—

(1) adding explicit authority for the Interior Department to sell royalty-in-kind oil or gas for as little as half its fair market value in implementing that part of the Energy Policy Act under an agreement that the purchaser will be required to provide an appropriate amount of resources to a Federal low-income energy assistance program;

(2) clarifying that such a sale at a discounted price will be deemed to comply with the Anti-deficiency Act; and

(3) authorizing the Interior Department to issue rules and enter into agreements that are considered appropriate in order to implement that part of the Energy Policy Act.

These changes are specifically designed to correct the legal deficiencies that the Interior Department has determined currently make it impossible for it to implement this part of the Energy Policy Act.

McKEESPORT TIGERS WIN STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the McKeesport Tigers on their 2005 PIAA Class AAAA state football championship.

The Tigers' 49–10 victory over the Bethlehem Liberty Hurricanes was one of the most outstanding performances ever in a state title game. I want my colleagues to know just how proud I am of their talent, hard work, and determination. They are an outstanding example of the many admirable qualities possessed by the people of Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District.

McKeesport's second-ever state title capped off one of the greatest and most memorable postseason runs in Western Pennsylvania sports history. Their victory was indeed a team effort under the superb direction of coach George Smith, but there were several individuals who rose to the challenge and pulled through in the crunch. Quarterback Dan Kopolovich ran for three touchdowns and passed for a fourth. His teammate, running back Warren Waite, was able to gain over 100 yards and added yet another score. On the Tigers' defensive team, Travis McBride earned great distinction by returning an interception for a score. These athletes' outstanding performances, ably supported by those of their teammates, resulted in one of the largest margins of victory in the state title game's history.

I applaud the Tigers for their impressive display of teamwork and perseverance. They have truly demonstrated the quintessential characteristics of Western Pennsylvanians in their run to the championship.

I want to extend my warmest congratulations to the Tigers, Coach Smith, and the entire McKeesport School District and wish them all the best of luck in the future and hope for much continued success.

COLLEGE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 609) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965:

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act. H.R. 609 reauthorizes the Higher Education Act (HEA), including all discretionary programs under the HEA, such as Federal student financial aid programs, teacher training programs, and programs that provide aid to institutions of higher education serving minority populations. Reauthorizing the HEA provided the House with an excellent opportunity to invest in our Nation's future by making college more accessible and affordable. Unfortunately, H.R. 609 does not provide the investment in higher education